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McKena Katherine Martin
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What Components of Bullying Prevention are Present within Minnesota Schools and
Communities?

By

McKena Katherine Martin, B.S.W., LSW

MSW Clinical Research Paper

Presented to the Faculty of the
School of Social Work
St. Catherine University and University of St. Thomas
St. Paul, Minnesota
In Partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Social Work

Committee Members

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The Clinical Research Project is a graduation requirement for MSW students at St. Catherine University/ University of St. Thomas School of Social Work in St. Paul, Minnesota and is conducted within a nine-month time frame to demonstrate facility with basic social research methods. Students must independently conceptualize a research problem, formulate a research design that is approved by a research committee and the university Institutional Review Board, implement the project, and publicly present the findings of study. This project is neither a Master's thesis nor a dissertation.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine which components of bullying prevention are present within Minnesota schools and communities, according to Minnesota school social workers. This study was a quantitative study, which used surveys to collect data. Respondents answered 37 questions regarding bullying at their respective schools. Thirty-four ($n = 34$) Minnesota school social workers were recruited through the Minnesota School Social Work Association using email. The findings from this study demonstrated that Minnesota schools and communities are implicating most components needed for an effective bullying prevention program. The findings also implicated that continuing research needs to look at differences in rural versus urban settings and differing types of bullying among students. School social workers should be aware of the impact bullying has on students and continue implementing school bullying prevention programs.

Acknowledgments

I would like to begin by thanking my chair, Kari Fletcher. Thank you for being supportive throughout this entire process. To my committee members, Julie Ann Porath and Barton Erickson, thank you for your enthusiasm regarding my topic. My project would not have been possible without you all in it.

To my family, thank you for always supporting me. I would not be where I am today if you wouldn't have let me make mistakes and guided me along in this journey called life. I thank you for always encouraging me to follow my heart and being proud of me no matter what. Mom, thank you for being my biggest cheerleader and my personal editor throughout my entire schooling career. You have truly inspired me to become the person I am today. Dad, thank you for always remaining positive and putting a smile on my face when I needed it the most. Joshua thanks for just being you.

To Dennis, thank you for encouraging me to take breaks from this paper and from homework but also pushing me when I needed it. I appreciated that you listened to me talk about social work, bullying and other school topics for the last year. You helped remind me to enjoy the little things in life throughout this process. I don't know how I would've done it without you.

To my classmates in research seminar, we did it! I couldn't have done it without everyone's support and guidance. Thank you for making this research process more enjoyable and making me laugh and smile along the way.

Finally, I would like to thank the Minnesota School Social Work Association and the Minnesota school social workers that participated in my survey. You made my project possible and helped contribute to the literature on bullying.

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What Bullying Components are Present Within Minnesota Schools and Communities?

Introduction

The prevalence of bullying within today's society can be witnessed throughout primary and secondary education. The impact of bullying on students is pervasive; school shootings, suicides, and cyberbullying are among the challenges students encounter (Harlow & Roberts, 2009; Meyer-Adams & Conner, 2008; Slovak & Singer, 2009). After the senseless killing sprees at Columbine High School, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Universities and Red Lake High School, more questions are being raised about bullying and how to prevent tragedies such as these, from occurring (Flannery, Wester & Singer, 2004; Haeseler, 2010; Meyer-Adams & Conner, 2008; Olweus, 1993). Highly publicized suicides throughout the nation suggest more attention toward violence prevention in areas such as bullying is indicated. Some of the younger victims who lost their life due to bullying were Megan Meier and Ryan Patrick Halligan (Megan Meier Foundation, n.d.; Ryan's Story, n.d.; Slovak & Singer, 2009, p. 5). Both Meier (age 14) and Halligan (age 13) completed suicide because of the relentless bullying they endured. With technology evolving every day and more students becoming connected, issues of cyberbullying emerge. The government and schools are faced with challenging concerns to effectively manage off campus bullying and cyberbullying, which questions the schools authority (Slovak & Singer, 2009). The effectiveness of the programs aimed at addressing bullying are now in question.

Statistics that support the prevalence and scope of the bullying among students can help illustrate ways in which the United States bullying epidemic continues to grow.

In 1988, a research project conducted by Perry, Kusel and Perry reported that 10% of children grades three through six reported feeling victimized due to school bullying. In 2001 a study concluded that 30% of students were involved, as the bully or the bullied, in school bullying (Nansel et al., 2001). As the issue of bullying continues to grow it should be looked at as a serious problem that needs to be addressed immediately.

The effects of bullying among children and adolescents in school are important to understand in terms of its potential short-term and long-term effects. The effects of bullying can be seen from various perspectives- the bully, the bullies, bully-victims, bystanders and across different settings- schools, sporting events, home and in the community (Esbensen & Carson, 2009; Meyer-Adams & Conner, 2009; Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). A short-term effect of bullying is that the schools "... environment is tainted" (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005, p. 108), which inhibits children to discover, learn and grow socially and academically. When there is a negative image on the psychosocial environment of a school, students may act in aggressive manners (fighting or carrying a gun to school), or they may act avoidantly (skipping school, not going to class, not socializing in school) (Meyers-Adams & Conner, 2008). When bullying occurs repeatedly in schools it has a, "... profound and lasting effects on students' mental health and school performance" (Meyers- Adams & Conner, 2008, p. 211). With the effects of bullying affecting students while in school and later in life, it is important to evaluate programs aimed at preventing bullying.

The effects of bullying can be complicated to measure for numerous reasons. Students may feel uncomfortable reporting bullying, may have a difficult time determining what exactly is considered to be bullying and different schools may have

different ideas of what bullying looks like. In unsafe environments, such as one bullying creates, students are less likely to report bullying because they don't want to be labeled as a "victim" or invite more attention to being bullied (Esbensen & Carson, 2009). Students may be less likely to report bullying if they are not educated on the different types of bullying. For example, bullying in friend groups may not be reported because it is not a "typical" example of bullying. Mishna (2003) states that bullying within friendship groups, "...illuminate[s] themes worthy of further investigation" (p. 240). School officials, parents, teachers and students often have difficult times when an incident of bullying occurs because, "...defining bullying and deciding whether an incident constitutes bullying are complex and overlapping processes" (Mishna, 2003, p. 240). The challenge of measuring bullying supports the idea that further research needs to be done on this topic.

In the absence of accurate data regarding bullying, schools are an ideal place to explore the issue of bullying. School environments are conducive for addressing bullying because it is where students spend much of their time, where they are supervised and where norms for how they interact among their peers are established. Bullying and cyberbullying are issues that "... can involve students at all grade levels..." (Slovak & Singer, 2009, p. 11); therefore, it is important to study this issue.

In efforts to address bullying, schools have attempted to create policies, change school environments and establish positive behavioral norms in classrooms. Policies in schools need to be the guidelines for students to know what is acceptable behavior and what is not, "... bullies must be aware of school policies on bullying and should be held accountable if a rule is broken" (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005, p. 107). School

environment is extremely important when it comes to the prevention of bullying, “The most successful school-based programs do more than reach out to the individual child; they also seek to change the culture and climate of the school” (Whitted & Dupper, 2005, p. 169). Anxious and scared students are the result of bullying within a school environment; students need to feel comfortable and secure in order to begin dealing with the issue of bullying (Batsche & Knoff, 1994). Establishing positive classroom settings, rules and boundaries are ways that schools try to reduce bullying. By teachers and staff “...clarifying and communicating behavior norms...” (Whitted & Dupper, 2005, p. 169), students can begin to learn how to interact with other students without bullying.

To illustrate how bullying is present close to home, Minnesota’s Twin Cities area Anoka-Hennepin school district lost nine of its students due to completed suicides over a two year period (2009 and 2010). Although it still remains controversial as to why they committed suicide, most believe that the deaths were directly attributed to bullying due to sexual orientation. The district held a neutrality policy when it came to sexual orientation and school conflict. Anoka-Hennepin school district dealt with legal battles and was forced to address their bullying rules and policies after being sued (Erdely, 2012). After the intense scrutiny the Anoka-Hennepin school district came under, the Governor initiated a Task Force on the Prevention of School Bullying on February 21st, 2012. The final statement made by the Governor Dayton of Minnesota stated that the recommendations needed to be implemented as soon as possible. The recommendations included clarification of bullying definitions, clearer policies and heightened collaboration among schools and government (Prevention of Bullying Task Force, 2012).

As the above example of bullying illustrates, the effects of bullying can be devastating without the support, advocacy and guidance of school personnel. School social workers are well positioned to play a vital role in the fight against bullying because of the multiple roles they assume within a school (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). School social workers connect with students, teachers, family members, communities and are in the position where they can bring concerned persons together to stand up to bullying. One of the most important roles a social worker plays in a school is being there for the children who are bullied. School social workers can provide education to parents and educators that can help increase their awareness and responsiveness to the children's viewpoint and emotions (Landau et al., 2001; Mishna, 2003). School social workers can facilitate creating and implementing bullying programs in schools, planning for evaluation and maintenance of bullying programs in place, delegating tasks and duties to other staff members participating and helping to identify possible funding to run a bullying program (Dupper, 2003; Whitted & Dupper, 2005).

The purpose of this study is to further the knowledge and awareness regarding the serious issue of bullying. The specific angle of this study will determine which components of bullying prevention are present within Minnesota schools and communities from the perspective of school social workers. The research question for this project is: Which components of bullying prevention programs are present within Minnesota schools and communities?

Literature Review

Bullying is an issue that has evolved throughout the decades. Bullying now has taken on different forms and the effects can even be deadly. The first country that took an interest into its bullying problems was Sweden during the late 1960s and early 1970s; it then spread to other Scandinavian countries, specifically Norway. In 1982, 10-14 year old boys committed suicide due to unrelenting school bullying (Olweus, 1993). Dan Olweus, an advocate for anti-bullying programs and researcher on bullying, laid most of the groundwork to begin researching bullying.

This section will present a summary of the research on bullying. The research presents information on what bullying is, profile of the bully, effects of being a bully, profile of the victim, effects from bullying, profile of bully victims, and bullying interventions. This literature review will also discuss implications for social work practice.

Bullying

The definition of bullying is the foundation to which bullying is identified in schools. A clear, concise definition provides the parameters for effectively and efficiently identifying bullying behaviors and the tools to teach students, parents, and schools. Historically, an inability to arrive at a shared understanding of bullying has led to an, “...underreporting of the phenomenon and an underestimate of the effects of being bullied” (Esbensen & Carson, 2009, p. 230). Many researchers define bullying as the, “...senseless physical, psychological, sexual abuse by an individual or group of individuals to an individual over an extended amount of time creating a power imbalance, fear, or pattern of abuse” (Whitted & Dupper, 2005, p. 168).

Bullying that focuses on personal aspects of an individual are racial bullying and sexual bullying (Nemours Foundation, n.d.; Whitted & Dupper, 2005). *Racial bullying* is when a student is bullied because of their specific race or ethnicity. Some bullying actions that may take place with this specific type of bullying include, "... making racial slurs, writing graffiti, mocking the victim's culture or making offensive gestures" (Whitted & Dupper, 2005, p. 168; Committee for Children, 2003). *Sexual bullying* is bullying that is focused around someone's sexual preference, sexual history or physically bullying someone in a sexual manner (Whitted & Dupper, 2005; Committee for Children, 2003).

Three traditional types of bullying—power imbalance, relational and non-physical bullying and physical bullying—have also been identified that adds scope to the definition of bullying (Mishna, 2003). *Power imbalance* is a type of bullying that happens when a student or group of students try to exercise power over another student. This usually happens when an older /stronger student bullies a younger/weaker student. *Relational and non-physical bullying* includes spreading lies or false stories about another person, excluding others from groups and taking peoples possessions. The last type of bullying, the most known form of bullying, is *physical bullying*, which includes hitting, pushing, punching or any other type of physical harm.

More contemporary forms of bullying have emerged through research and studies, which creates a clearer definition of bullying. One example of bullying that occurs is *cyberbullying*, which takes place online and is increasing as youth spend more time on the internet (Cross, 2008; Li, 2010; Li, 2006a, 2006b; Thompson, Smith, & Goldsmith, 2008; Willard, 2004a). Similar to bullying, "cyberbullying is reflected in low self-esteem,

school failure, anger, anxiety, depression, school avoidance, violence and suicide” (Li, 2010, p. 374).

Cyberbullying, which is facilitated through the use of online technology (e.g., websites, cell phones, text messaging, email), is supported by intentional and ongoing behavior by an individual or group to hurt or harm others (Belsey, 2004). Cyberbullying can further be defined into seven sub-categories: flaming, harassment, cyberstalking, denigration, masquerade, outing and trickery and exclusion (Li, 2010). First, is *flaming* which is an inappropriate message specifically for a person sent online. Second, is *harassment* where an individual continuously sends someone rude or hurtful messages. Third is cyberstalking, which is considered harassment that includes promises of physical harm. Fourth, is *denigration*, which includes posting rude or hurtful comments about a specific person in public. Fifth, is *masquerade* where an individual *imitates* someone else and purposefully makes him or her look like something they are not. Sixth, is *outing and trickery* where individuals post in a public forum someone’s secrets or photos. Finally, *exclusion* is intentionally leaving someone out of an online group or chat (p. 372-373).

Although there have been no specific studies done on the different types of bullying, researchers believe that a clearer definition of bullying needs to be researched and developed (Esbensen & Clark, 2009). In efforts to further understand this phenomenon, Slovak and Singer (2009) created a study based around school social workers’ views and awareness regarding the issue of cyberbullying. The sample they used were school social workers from states that were members of the Mid West School Social Work Council (MSSWC). Slovak and Singer ended up surveying 399 school social workers from nine out of the eleven MSSWC states. There was representation from

suburban, urban and rural schools, and elementary, middle school and high school levels. The idea of the study was “...designed to capture SSWs’ [school social workers] perceptions of cyberbullying, with a focus on their views of the seriousness and pervasiveness of it...” (Slovak & Singer, 2009, p. 8). They found that their sample of school social workers believed that cyberbullying was a problem at their school and that it occurs off campus on their own time. They also found that cyberbullying needs more attention and recognition that it is as harmful as “traditional” bullying.

Profile of the Bully

In addition to defining bullying it is important to understand who is involved in bullying, specifically the ones instigating the bullying. Bullies are individuals who actively partake in bullying other people (Harlow & Roberts, 2009; Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). There is significant amount of evidence which states that bullies are more likely to be boys than girls (Batschse & Knoff, 1994; Boulton & Smith, 1990; Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Harlow & Roberts, 2009; Nansel et al., 2001; Parault et al., 2007). Students who bully often times come from difficult family situations; they may have learned bad coping mechanisms and other maladaptive behaviors (fighting, verbal assaults, putting others down) that contribute to bullying in school (Haeseler, 2010; Jarolimek, Foster, & Kellough, 2005). Bullies, who may be raised by parents who use physical punishment as discipline, are often taught to react to situations in unhealthy ways (e.g., fighting) (Batsche & Knoff, 1994; Loeber & Dishion, 1984). Furthermore, bullies have often been labeled as having “aggressive reaction patterns” where they “...display aggressive behavior in many different situations...” perhaps due to how they are being raised at home (Olweus, 1993, p. 39). Parents, who were bullies as children,

may have taught their children to bully others and have reinforced bullying as an intergenerational cycle (Carney & Merrell, 2001).

The characteristics of bullies, similar to their home lives, are thought to be unfavorable. Aggression is a trademark characteristic of children who bully others; they are also labeled as being impulsive and having strong urges to control other students (Olweus, 1993; Parault et al., 2007). Bullies are not able to act according to social norms and have low psychosocial abilities than do other students who are not considered to be a bully. Haynie et al. (2001), stated that, "... bullying might allow children to achieve their immediate goals without learning socially acceptable ways to negotiate with others resulting in persistent maladaptive social patterns" (p. 31), which reinforces the impulsive nature of individuals who bully others. Bullies are more likely than non-bullies to be associated with the use of alcohol and smoking. Even though bullies are intense aggressive people, they have an easy time making friends; "... bullying behaviors may serve to establish status within peer groups, allowing children who bully to maintain a high social status with other children who bully" (Haynie et al., 2001, p. 150; Nansel et al., 2001). Children who bully and are able to make and keep friends are reinforced to continue to victimize others.

Haynie et al. (2001) created a study that focused around students who bully, victims of bullying and those who identify as both the victim and the bully. A suburban town with seven middle schools was surveyed. A total of 4,263 (91.3%) of students filled out the survey, of which 50.9% were female and 49.1% were male. The focus of the study was to assess behaviors and attitudes that were the focal point of the districts bullying intervention program. The survey asked students questions regarding the

following topics: bullying, victimization, problem behaviors, behavior misconduct, self-control, deviance acceptance, deviant peer influences, social competence, school adjustment, school bonding, depressive symptoms, parental involvement and parental support. Haynie et al. (2001) discovered that children who identified as bullies were more impulsive than other students, had less self-control and externalized their behaviors while victims internalize their behavior. It was found that bullies had aggressive behaviors even towards those they considered to be “friends”. They also found that the child’s upbringing has an influence on the chance of becoming a bully (Haynie et al., 2001). It is important to identify all the categories of bullying when conducting a research study related to this topic.

Effects of Being a Bully

While bullying is often thought to affect victims, bullies “... are not immune to the negative effects of bullying” (Haynie et al., 2001, p. 150). Bullies may suffer from severe mental health concerns such as: attention-deficit disorder, depression and oppositional-conduct disorder (Kaltiala-Heino, Rimpela, & Rimpela, 2000; Kumpulainen, Rasanen, & Puura, 2001). The effects of bullying can persist into adulthood. The characteristics bullies usually possess are not favorable to a successful future; boys who identified as bullies in grades six through nine had already had at least one court conviction by the time they were 24 and were four times as likely to have committed crimes than those who identified as not being a bully (Olweus, 1991).

In one research study, Kaltiala-Heina et al. (2000) explored children involved in bullying who identified as the bully, victim, or both the bully and the victim had an increased association with mental health issues (e.g., depression, anxiety, or

psychosomatic issues). This study was conducted by a survey, *The School Health Promotion Study*, administered to students in eighth and ninth grade. This study was conducted in Finland two times. The first time was in 1995 and was located in one region, city, and two towns in Finland. The second study was conducted in 1997 in two different regions of Finland. A combined total of 133 secondary schools participated in both the 1995 and 1997 studies. They discovered that being involved with bullying, in any way, was associated with increased mental health issues. They also found that students who identified as bullies were more likely to abuse alcohol, and that the family environment was important in determining whether a child would bully or not (Kaltiala-Heina et al., 2000). The impact bullying has on mental health is an important consideration when collecting new data on bullying.

Profile of the Victim

Just as it is important to understand the characteristics of bullies, the profiles of victims are also important to understand and learn about in order to better address the effects of bullying. Victims are labeled as individuals who are experiencing the bullying behaviors from others (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Olweus (1993) and Brockenbrough et al. (2002) conclude that there are two types of victims: passive/submissive victims and provocative victims. *Passive/submissive victims* are described as being shy, withdrawn, and very sensitive. *Provocative victims* are described as having characteristics of a passive/submissive victim but also mixed in with aggressive traits (Olweus, 1993).

Repeat victims of bullying often times express lower self-esteem, higher fear in school, worrying about being bullied and an over all low sense of safety in school (Esbensen & Carson, 2009; Harlow & Roberts, 2009; Nansel et al., 2000). Research

studies have shown that victims of bullying have extreme emotional disturbances such as depression, anxiety and low self-confidence (Olweus, 1993; Nansel et al., 2001; Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Victims also tend to internalize their behavior and develop psychosomatic symptoms (high blood pressure or ulcers) due to bullying trauma (Kumpulainen et al., 1998). Unlike bullies, victims are often known to possess inadequate peer support groups, particularly at school (Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Olweus 1993; Nansel et al., 2001). Victims of bullying seem to relate to and get along better with older adults such as teachers, parents, or paraprofessionals because they are easier to relate with (Olweus, 1993).

The family life of children who identify as victims of bullying tend to have parents who are overbearing, overprotective, intrusive, and sheltering. Parents may act this way because they recognize that their child has low in self-esteem, are anxious, or are insecure (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Olweus (1993) wondered if the parent's reaction to their child's insecurities or anxieties may contribute to them being bullied.

In 1994, a two-part study was conducted by Slee to determine if there is an association between anxiety and children who are victims of bullying. The first study conducted in an urban area of Australia consisted of 353 participants whose ages ranged between three and seven years of age. Of the 353 participants, 160 were female and 183 were male. The survey assessed the participant's inclination to bully others, to be bullied themselves and to engage in pro-social tendencies. Other questions measured how safe they felt at school, whether students intervened on another bullying situation and why they perceived some students do not ask for help when bullied. The second study was done in a metropolitan area of Australia. The participants included in this study were

between the ages four to seven and attended a primary school. There were a total of 114 participants, 64 female and 50 male. They were asked the same questions regarding bullying as in study one; however, they were also asked to complete a *Social Anxiety Scale for Children* (SASC), which asked about their anxiety related to school events. They found that children who report being victims of bullying are more anxious than non-bullied children. Slee stated, "...it would appear that anxiety experienced by the victimized children arises largely out of their environment and specifically from their concerns regarding peer evaluation" (Slee, 1994, p. 105).

Effects of Bullying

The effects of bullying impact the lives of victims and their loved ones, both in the short term (present) and long-term (well into adulthood) (Olweus, 1993). It appears that the amount a child is bullied does not have a direct impact on the severity of the victimization. Esbensen & Clark (2009) state, "...minor victimization, although not very newsworthy, should not be ignored" (p. 215). In other words, a child can be bullied one time and have the same victimization as a child who is bullied continuously (Esbensen & Carson, 2009; Parault et al., 2007). However, this same study found that students of repeat victimization reported, "...less use of conflict resolution skills, higher fear and perceived risk of victimization, and lower levels of perceived school safety" (p. 224). Children and adolescents who are bullied may identify themselves as *losers*, *loners*, or *outcasts* (Brockenbrough et al., 2002; Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2000). Those who identify as being a victim may react by internalizing their problems and stress, bringing things to school to make them feel safe (guns, weapons) or even suicide (Brockenbrough et al., 2002; Olweus 1993). Victims during their school years reported being depressed and

having low self-esteem, which was lower than students who were not victimized in school (Olweus, 1993).

In a three-wave study, Esbensen & Carson (2009) researched the consequences of being bullied. There were 1,117 students that participated across fourteen schools, nine cities and four states. The participants fell between the ages of 10 and 15 and 54% were female. They were surveyed on their views on the definition of bullying and if one “generic” term works for everything, the varying degrees of bullying victimization and the effects of repeated victimization. Students were surveyed three times: once at the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year, once six months after the first test, and finally during the beginning of the 2005-2006 school year. Esbensen and Carson (2009) reported that students don’t report bullying as much as it occurs because of the lack of a shared meaning of bullying or victimization. They also found that being bullied carried substantial emotions including low levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy and not feeling safe in the school setting (Esbensen & Carson, 2009). How students feel in school is a direct reflection of the bullying prevention programs that are being implemented or the lack thereof.

Profile of Bully-Victims

More recently it has become recognized that it can be difficult to draw clear distinctions between bullies and victims. *Bully-victims* are unique individuals in that they participate in bullying other students and are victims of bullying. These students are important to consider and recognize when dealing with bullying. Bully-victims are individuals who engage in bullying other peers but are also bullied by their peers. Haynie et al. (2001) stated that, “...one half of the bullies reported being victims as well” (p. 44).

They are also referred to as reactive bullies or provocative bullies as discussed previously (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005; Olweus, 1993). Those who identify as both the bully and the victim represent an extreme high-risk group, because they suffer both the effects of being a victim and being a bully (Haynie et al., 2001; Nansel et al., 2001).

Students labeled as bully-victims show less ability with regard to their social and psychological behavior, have difficult behaviors to manage, possess low self-esteem and poor social skills and tend to perform poorly in school (Haynie et al., 2001; Nansel et al., 2001). Bully-victims have characteristics to externalize their behavior and to act in a hyperactive manner (Kumpulainen et al., 1998). Those who identify as bully-victims may have unhealthy relationships with peers, may be attracted towards more deviant peer groups which could lead to the possibility and higher risk of developing antisocial behavior (Haynie et al., 2001).

Although the idea and term of “bully-victims” is still relatively new, there are researchers who are developing studies to learn more about this unique group of people (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Haynie et al. (2001) were one of the first research groups that identified bully-victims as a specific category. In a study conducted by Kumpulainen et al. (2001), children who were labeled as bully-victims were more likely to have mental illnesses than children labeled as just bullies (21.5% oppositional-conduct disorder, 17.7% depression, 17.7% attention-deficit disorder). In a similar study by Kaltiala-Heino et al. (2000), bully-victims were compared to bullies or victims to determine across groups who were at a higher risk of developing depressive symptoms, co-occurring mental health problems, anxiety, eating disorders, and psychosomatic symptoms. Lastly, in a study created by Brockenbrough and colleagues (2002), students were surveyed on

issues related to bullying. Of the participants, 30% were labeled as bully-victims and reported that they were more likely than the passive/submissive victims and the non-victims to engage in dangerous activities (carrying weapons, using alcohol, getting into physical altercations).

Solutions to Bullying

In the absence of a solution to eliminate bullying in schools across the country, different solutions and theories have been proposed that address how to manage this problem. Batsche and Knoff (1994) suggested through previous research that every district conduct an assessment of their schools to determine the frequency of bullying and generate accurate data. School districts need to find out how school staff, students, and parents view bullying and their attitudes toward it. Every school districts approach to manage bullying, implementing policies, interventions and other strategies to deal with bullying needs to be specific and created especially for school districts to help the unique needs of its schools (1994).

In the absence of research studies that directly address the effectiveness of preventive intervention based programs, it is important that more studies be done to identify prevention programs, which are critical when addressing bullying (Batsche & Knoff, 1994; Haeseler, 2010; Jensen, Dieterich, Brisson, Bender, & Powell, 2010; Nansel, et al., 2001; Slovak & Singer, 2009). Many researchers agree that interventions need to be in place; school officials, students, teachers, volunteers, and parents need to be educated on their districts bullying prevention policy. Evidence-based practice models (EBP) are other ways school social workers and school officials can help with bullying. Examples of EBP models include having an in-service training program to teach school

employees about bullying and helping at-risk students. Teachers need to develop their intrapersonal skills when dealing with bullied children. Another consideration is to implement a newsletter for parents to increase awareness on active listening with children who may be bullied and working intensely in the schools to help students at risk of being bullied (Harlow & Roberts, 2009). Li (2010) also suggests implementing a school help line, using email, creating positive web links, or making a “help” box so more students will be inclined to self-report or report other incidences of bullying.

Other ideas believed to help decrease bullying at school deal directly with children’s awareness and creating norms and expectations in classrooms. Understanding why a child is engaging in bullying suggests that there may be some turmoil happening on the inside or somewhere else in the child’s life. Treating a child in a more holistic fashion will better serve the child, who they encounter and interact with. Haeseler (2010) suggests that, “digging deep, finding the pathology of the bullying, as this conduct is simply a symptom or expression of what is occurring on the inside of a child” (p. 960). Finding the “...deeper hidden reasoning behind bullying” (p. 960) is not only essential, but also the only way to help the bully and the bullied. Teachers need to create an environment that is safe and respectful that adheres to strict norms that do not tolerate bullying, reinforces effective rules, and promotes a positive place for students to coexist (Haeseler, 2010; Whitted & Dupper, 2005).

Because bullying extends beyond “bullies” and “those who are bullied,” it is important to educate all community and school stakeholders that are effected by the effects of bullying—students, teachers, parents, and other school officials—on their role as “bystanders,” the lack of consensus on definitions around bullying, and what the

effects of bullying. Understanding an issue is the first step in learning how to find solutions to the issue (Batsche & Knoff, 1994, Mishna, 2003; Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Policies surrounding bullying are often vague and provide little direction for schools. More effective policies and policies specifically addressing cyberbullying need to be seen in order to create effective change (Batsche & Knoff, 1994; Li, 2010). In a study done by Li (2010), he explains that policies directed towards both traditional bullying and cyberbullying need to be strong, detailed, and unified.

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

Bullying prevention programs serve as an important tool for schools to manage and address bullying. Dan Olweus, a Norwegian researcher who has studied the effects of bullying and possible interventions since the 1970's, is credited with developing a well-known bullying prevention model that focuses upon middle school age children. Through his research studies, he has compiled his findings and developed a bullying prevention program. Olweus suggests that before the prevention program is set in place a general sense of awareness and involvement needs to happen from the teachers and other professionals at school and from parents of students. All members of the program need to recognize the severity of the problem and be dedicated to the program. He suggests surveying the school that will be implementing the prevention program to gain a better idea of the unique needs of that particular environment (Olweus, 1993). After this step of the prevention process is complete, interventions at the school, class, and individual level can begin.

The intervention at the school level focuses on the school as a whole- it does not single out children who bully, are victimized or who are simply bystanders. Olweus

suggests specific ideas to initiate an intervention at a school level. Having a school conference is a good way to start the bullying prevention process. Creating better supervision for students is important to decreasing bullying. Providing better supervision of students during their lunch and outdoor play is important. Children who are bullied at school often times are embarrassed or too shy to inform school personnel. Olweus found that a good way to deal with this issue is to create a “contact telephone”. A contact telephone would be run by someone related with the school (e.g., a teacher, a psychologist, or a counselor) and would be used by students and/or their parents to call and report, anonymously acts of bullying and victimization. Parental involvement in the program is very important; creating a parent teacher association (PTA) is a way for parents to get involved in stopping bullying. Along these same lines, teachers could also create a group that meets regularly to talk about the development of the program (Olweus, 1993).

The classroom level interventions are important to establish because it is how norms are established and where bullying can effectively be dealt with. Interventions at the classroom level should begin with clear and understood rules around bullying; Olweus (1993) stated, “These rules should be expressed in as concrete manner as possible” (p. 81). Olweus suggested that three good “beginning” rules to enforce are, not bullying other students, help out students who are being victimized, and make an effort to include students who are shy and not always included. Role-plays, skits and reading are ways to increase student’s awareness about bullying behaviors. It is important for teachers to acknowledge positive and expected behaviors, rather than focus on only negative behavior. With that being said, there needs to be consistent consequences for

poor behavioral choices. Students need to know what they are doing well with and clear guidelines for improvement. Similar to the PTA meetings at the class intervention level, having classroom meetings regularly scheduled so students can express concerns and support one another is important. Incorporating cooperative learning environments into classrooms is another important aspect to the classroom level intervention; teaching children to work with one another and gain respect is important in this level of intervention. Engaging students in positive activities is important to develop a positive milieu in the classroom (e.g., outings, field trips). Lastly, it is important for students to have an opportunity to attend the PTA meetings so all levels of change are represented. (Olweus, 1993).

The final level of intervention that Olweus (1993) suggests happens at the individual level. There needs to be serious talks with both the bullies and the students being victimized. When talking with the bully it is important for the teacher to relay that bullying is not accepted; this is where it is important to have strict and understood rules regarding bullying. Talks with the victimized student should focus around assuring their safety and validating how they feel. Not only is it important to talk with both the bully and the victimized student, but to also meet with their parents and suggest implementing a support group for parents of bullying students and parents of victimized students. If victimized children find staying at a school too difficult and is impacting their life in too many negative ways, it is important to consider moving students to different classes or even schools (Olweus, 1993).

Implications for Present Research

Previous research shows that the bullying issue in the United States is extensive and is continuing to increase. Bullying in schools, “merits serious attention, both for future research and preventative intervention” (Nansel et al., 2001, p. 1). In most studies reviewed about bullying they have focused on the pervasiveness and its rate of occurrence. Little research has been done on which components of bullying prevention are actually being implemented. Previous studies suggest that more research needs to be done on which interventions can be most beneficial to deal with bullying (Nansel et al., 2001; Haynie et al., 2001).

The results of this research are important for social workers and school districts because it is critical to keep students safe while attending school. This project was developed to determine which bullying components are present within Minnesota schools and communities.

Conceptual Framework

The importance of identifying research lenses in a research study is crucial to effectively and efficiently conducting a project. It is central for the principal researcher to identify theories that will impact their view and perception on the data being collected. This practice is in place in order to ensure that their personal views and experiences are not skewing the data. The most important lenses to identify in a research project are: theoretical lenses, professional lenses, and personal lenses.

Theoretical Lenses

The theoretical lenses that will be used to conduct this research are the systems theory approach and the Erik Erikson’s Eight Stages of Psychosocial Development.

Systems theory is based around the notion that all living things are made up of different layers or “systems” that create that entity, “...systems perspective sees human behavior as the outcome of reciprocal interactions of persons operating within linked social systems” (Hutchison & Contributors, 2011, p. 38). As Conoley (1987) states, “The important principle emerging from this large body of research [systems theory] is that children’s behavior exists in and is determined by who they are, where they are, and with whom they are” (p. 192). It is the hope that when one system surrounding a problem or issue is changed, that the other systems involved will change as well. Therefore, it will effect a system wide change in hopes for the better. It is the responsibility of schools and communities to work as a systems-based unit” to help children suffering from bullying and the students who bully others (Nansel et al., 2001). The systems that connected with a school are: families, community, faith based, sports, and other extracurricular activities students participate in.

Erik Erikson is a developmental theorist that created the eight stages of normal psychosocial development. It is important to achieve all stages on time and successfully, in order to complete the latter stages and avoid abnormal behavior. The eight stages start at infancy and go to adulthood. For the purposes of this project, it is especially important to understand individuals during the life stages of preschool age, school age, and adolescence. These stages are particularly important, because most individuals in these stages will be attending school. While individuals are in the preschool age stage their psychosocial challenge to overcome is initiative versus guilt. Children who are on track developmentally—or are in what theorists consider “normative stages” of their development—will engage in play that tests their parents boundaries and begin to ask a

lot of questions. A bully—who theorists often consider to be at-risk, developmentally “derailed,” or in a state of “arrested development—during this stage may want to be on their own more and have parents who do not provide structure or consistency necessary for them to move forward developmentally. A victim during this stage may not want to test boundaries and not be curious about the world around them, and may want to stay close with their parents while their counterparts are struggling with maturational struggles related to separation and autonomy.

In the next developmental stage, the school age, children must overcome latency age (ages seven to 11) challenges associated with industry versus inferiority. Children in a normative stage of development will be encouraged and supported by important adult figures and will gain a better sense of self-esteem. A bully and victim during this stage of development may feel inferior in the world and feel like they lack skills that are valued by the world.

The final stage applicable to this study is adolescence, where individuals must overcome growth necessary to address maturational concerns specific to identity versus identity diffusion (Hutchinson & Contributors, 2011). Adolescents at a normative stage of development will begin to have better understanding of who they are and what they want out of life. A bully and victim during this stage may feel extremely confused about who they are and not have a solid sense of what they want to do with their life.

It is important to establish theories that will help create deeper meaning in a research study. In the current study systems theory will help better interpret and understand data because of the many different systems that take part in bullying. For example school system, government, familial, and community systems that also have an

impact on bullying. Understanding Erik Erikson's eight stages of normal psychosocial development is also important for the current study. It is important to be aware of the conflicts that students could be going through while attending school. It helps to help better understand who the bullies, victims and bully-victims are and how to effectively help them.

Professional Lenses

The career and job one chooses to pursue in their life is often times quite indicative of their personal passions. I chose to practice social work because of my passion to help those who are voiceless and who are oppressed. I have worked with children in multiple settings, and find this population to be the most vulnerable therefore needing the most attention. Through my work with children, I have noticed that there is a severe lack of understanding of the severity of bullying issues children endure while in school. Although my work with children has never been in a school setting I have heard about their stories, and have seen its impacts on them and their family. My previous experiences have shaped my view of the school system and of it not being supportive and not doing enough to help children who are viciously bullied. I feel like my bias of the school system may potentially affect how I view the data. I do hope to practice school social work one day, so this project is built to better help me understand what is being done to prevent bullying so I may one day be able to add to the prevention efforts.

Personal Lenses

Personal experiences and values shape our biases and beliefs we hold about particular topics. It's safe to say that most people have experienced some type of bullying while they were a student- a friend not letting you play with them, being excluded from a

group or telling secrets. Not unlike others, I have experienced bullying, and I have also taken part in bullying during my younger years in school. Although I never was a constant target of bullying, I witnessed others who were tormented daily and were never given a chance to fit in.

Values that I hold deep within myself and shape the core of who I am are focused around accepting others for who they are and treating others, as you would want to be treated. I believe these values are central to everything that is right and good. Because of my experiences and strong values, I believe that more should be done about preventing bullying - everyone deserves a quality education and freedom to express themselves in a safe learning environment. These personal biases and values have impacted the development of this project, specifically in the focus and angle of it. I chose to determine which components of bullying prevention programs are present, because I would like to promote a safe learning environment for all students.

Methodology

Research Design

The purpose of this study, to determine which components of bullying prevention are present within Minnesota schools and communities proposed by the following question: Which components of bullying prevention are present within Minnesota schools and communities? This research will investigate what schools are doing to help prevent bullying, as understood by school social workers.

The research design was a quantitative research study, conducted by a survey. This study utilized a cross-sectional design that "...measures behavior as it occurs at one point in time or over a relatively short period of time" (Marlow, 1993, p. 137). To ensure that enough participants completed the survey, a secondary convenience sample was given. The survey was distributed through the Minnesota School Social Worker Association (MSSWA) via an online survey software program termed Qualtrics. An email was sent by MSSWA to all of its school social work members. The convenience sample was given to school social workers throughout the state of Minnesota also via Qualtrics.

Sample

The aim of this research project was to survey 30-50 school social workers to determine which components of bullying prevention are present within Minnesota schools and communities. A total of 46 school social workers accessed the survey, but only 34 completed the survey. Participants for this research were found through the MSSWA and through a convenience sample of other school social workers not members of the MSSWA. The researcher is a current member of the MSSWA and was allowed to

send out her survey to other MSSWA members after the University of Saint Thomas Institutional Review Board approval (see Appendix A). The inclusion criterion for this project was to be a current Minnesota school social worker and currently working with any education level.

Protection of Human Subjects

Protection of human subjects was extremely important when conducting this research. To ensure that proper protection of all subjects was taken, this researcher submitted this research paper to her clinical research committee, which consisted of Kari Fletcher (research chair, PhD, LICSW), Julie Porath (committee member, MSW, LICSW), and Barton Erickson (committee member, school-based violence prevention coordinator). After the researcher's research committee team reviewed this research, it was sent to the University of Saint Thomas's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Once at the IRB, it was reviewed to ensure that all subjects participating in the project would be protected. This project met IRB standards, was approved, and an approval letter was sent to this researcher. It was then sent to the MSSWA (per requirements of MSSWA) and the survey was sent to MSSWA members. To reduce any possible risk to this study, the researcher provided participants with a resource sheet and decided to keep the survey completely anonymous to protect participant's confidentiality and privacy.

In order for subjects to participate in this study they agreed and signed the letter of informed consent prior to taking the survey (see Appendix B). This study did not collect any sensitive information of the participants, such as name, school name, district name or any other identifying factors. This researcher ensured that that confidentiality and anonymity of participants was protected throughout the research process. Subjects

could decide if they wanted to participate in the study, were allowed to skip questions during the survey and could exit the survey at any time.

Measurement

Data and information for this project was collected through a quantitative survey. This 37 question survey was developed by this researcher (see Appendix C). This researcher developed the questions based off reviewing the literature. Themes of what other researchers and studies stated should be included in an effective bullying prevention program were reviewed and considered. The beginning of the survey asked basic demographic questions (years worked as a school social worker, age group worked with, and level of licensure) about the social worker. The rest of the survey was related to bullying problems and intervention strategies at the particular school the social worker is. The survey utilized two different likert scales.

Data Analysis

This project utilized quantitative data analysis tools, specifically Qualtrics. Descriptive statistics were used to find the mean, median, mode and frequency of data collected. An inferential statistic was then run to determine if a relationship was present between two variables found in the data set.

Findings

Surveys were sent out through email by the Minnesota School Social Work Association (MSSWA), there are about 200 current members. The inclusion criteria for this survey required that participants be a current Minnesota school social worker. A total of 46 social workers accessed the survey, but only 34 (74%) participants met the inclusion criteria and completed the survey ($n = 34$).

First, the research findings will cover the demographics of the participants. Next the findings will cover bullying in regards to the social worker's school, awareness and involvement, interventions at the school level, interventions at the classroom level, and interventions at the individual level. Finally, the research findings will cover bullying and policies.

Descriptive Statistics

Demographics. Participants were asked a number of questions regarding their demographics, such as years as a school social worker, level of licensure, age group most worked with, location served, population served and region (see Table 1). A little over half of the participants had been a school social worker for 11-16+ years ($n = 20$; 58%). The majority of the participants that participated had a master's degree (Licensed Graduate Social Worker [LGSW], Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker [LICSW] OR Licensed Independent Social worker [LISW]) ($n = 25$; 74%). Exactly half of the participants work mostly with students in grades kindergarten through 5th grade ($n = 17$; 50%), and worked in schools that were located in rural settings ($n = 19$; 56%). The average student population among the schools was 300-500 ($n = 10$; 29%) students and 600-800 students ($n = 10$; 29%). While there was representation from almost all regions

of Minnesota, most were from Southeast ($n = 9$; 27%) and Twin Cities Metro ($n = 9$; 27%).

Table 1

Demographics of Survey Participants

<i>n = 34 (%)</i>	
Years as a social worker	
0-5	8 (24%)
6-10	6 (18%)
11-15	11 (32%)
16+	9 (26%)
Level of licensure	
LSW	7 (21%)
LGSW	8 (24%)
LICSW	13 (38%)
LISW	4 (12%)
Other	2 (6%)
Age group worked with	
K-5th	17 (50%)
6 th -8 th	8 (24%)
9 th -12 th	9 (26%)
Location of school	
Urban	9 (26%)
Rural	19 (56%)
Metro	6 (18%)
Number of students served	
0-200	8 (24%)
300-500	10 (29%)
600-800	10 (29%)
800+	6 (18%)
Region	
Northeast	1 (3%)
Northwest	1 (3%)
West central	7 (21%)
East central	0 (0%)
Southwest	6 (18%)
Southeast	9 (27%)
Twin Cities metro	9 (27%)

Note. LSW (Licensed Social Worker), LGSW (Licensed Graduate Social Worker), LICSW (Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker), LISW (Licensed Independent Social Worker).

Bullying in regards to participant's school. School social workers that participated in the survey were asked questions regarding bullying at their respective schools. When asked if their school collects information/data regarding bullying 45% responded that they agreed or strongly agreed ($n = 14$) (see Table 2). Most participants ($n = 11$; 35%) neither agreed nor disagreed that their school collaborates with the state of Minnesota to help support other schools and their anti-bullying efforts, while half disagreed or strongly disagreed ($n = 16$; 52%) that their school has created a school climate center with the MN Department of Education. Finally, data showed that participants had mixed feelings regarding if their school took into consideration the final report recommendations from the Governor's task force on bullying. A total of 36% ($n = 11$) of participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, 35% ($n = 11$) neither disagreed nor agreed and 29% ($n = 9$) agreed.

Participants were asked general questions regarding bullying and their school. Results were scattered regarding if the participant's school had a formal bullying program (see Table 3). A slight majority agreed or strongly agreed that their school had a formal program ($n = 17$; 54%), while 39% ($n = 12$) disagreed or strongly disagreed. More than half of the participant's agreed or strongly agreed that the bullying program at their school was effective and worth implementing ($n = 19$; 61%). A total of seventeen participants agreed or strongly agreed that bullying was a serious concern at their school (54%), nine participants disagreed or strongly disagreed that bullying was a concern (29%) and five participants neither agreed nor disagreed (16%). More than half of the respondents ($n = 17$; 55%) agreed or strongly agreed that they wish they could change an

aspect of how their school deals with bullying problems, 26% neither agreed nor disagreed ($n = 8$) and 19% disagreed ($n = 6$).

Table 2

Bullying Task Force Recommendations from Minnesota Governor

	<i>n = 31(%)</i>				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
School collaborates with other MN schools	3 (10%)	8 (26%)	11 (35%)	8 (26%)	1 (3%)
School climate	4 (13%)	12 (39%)	11 (35%)	4 (13%)	0 (0%)
Comply with Governor's task force	3 (10%)	8 (26%)	11 (35%)	9 (29%)	0 (0%)

Note. Questions from this section stemmed from the initiation of the Task Force on the Prevention of School Bullying. Minnesota Governor implemented this task force on February 21st, 2012. The recommendations from the task force included: clarifications of bullying definitions, clearer policies and heightened collaboration among schools and government. MN = Minnesota.

Table 3

Presence of Bullying Programs and Severity of Bullying in Schools

	<i>n = 31 (%)</i>				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Formal bullying program	5 (16%)	7(23%)	2 (6%)	11 (35%)	6 (19%)
Worth implementing	2 (6%)	4 (13%)	6 (19%)	15 (48%)	2 (6%)
Bullying is a serious concern	1 (3%)	8 (26%)	5 (16%)	15 (48%)	2 (6%)
Change an aspect	0 (0%)	6 (19%)	8 (26%)	13 (42%)	4 (13%)
Collects information/data	4 (13%)	6 (19%)	7 (23%)	10 (32%)	4 (13%)

Note. This table reflects respondents' answers to the following statements: My school has a formal bullying prevention program. I feel the bullying prevention program at my school is effective and worth implementing. Bullying at my school is a serious concern. I wish I could change an aspect of how my school deals with bullying problems. My school collects information/data regarding bullying.

Awareness/involvement. Participants were asked questions regarding their awareness and involvement of school professionals and parents within their schools in relation to bullying. The majority of the participants reported that social workers ($n = 17$;

65%) were the group of adults “very aware” of bullying in their school, followed by guidance counselors and administration ($n = 13$; 50%), teachers ($n = 9$; 35%) and parents who were just “aware” ($n = 9$; 35%) (see Table 4). When asked if members involved in the bully prevention program are serious about their role participants responded that teachers ($n = 15$; 55%) and parents ($n = 10$; 37%) were “involved”, while social workers ($n = 19$; 70%), guidance counselors ($n = 10$; 38%) and administration ($n = 12$; 44%) were “very involved”.

Table 4

<i>School and Parent Awareness of Bullying and Involvement with Prevention at School</i>					
	Very aware	Aware	Neutral/ uncertain	Relatively aware	Completely aware
Adults aware of bullying problem					
Teachers ($n = 26$)	9 (34%)	7 (27%)	2 (7%)	7 (27%)	1 (3%)
Social workers ($n = 26$)	17 (65%)	4 (15%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	4 (15%)
Guidance counselors ($n = 25$)	13 (52%)	4 (16%)	5 (20%)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)
Administration ($n = 26$)	13 (50%)	6 (23%)	3 (12%)	2 (7%)	2 (7%)
Parents ($n = 26$)	3 (12%)	9 (34%)	5 (19%)	8 (31%)	1 (3%)
Members involved are serious about their role					
Teachers ($n = 27$)	5 (19%)	15 (55%)	4 (15%)	2 (7%)	1 (4%)
Social workers ($n = 27$)	19 (70%)	6 (22%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Guidance counselors ($n = 26$)	10 (38%)	6 (23%)	7 (27%)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)
Administration ($n = 27$)	12 (44%)	10 (37%)	2 (7%)	3 (11%)	0 (0%)
Parents ($n = 27$)	1 (4%)	10 (37%)	8 (29%)	7 (26%)	1 (4%)

Note. This table reflects respondents’ answers to the following statements: The following groups of adults are aware of the bullying problem at their school. Members involved in the bully prevention program are serious about their role.

Interventions at the school level. The school social workers that participated in this survey were asked about the interventions that take place at the school level. Over half of the participant’s ($n = 15$; 60%) in the survey reported that they strongly disagreed or disagreed that their school held a celebration, pep fest or gathering regarding bullying (see Table 5). Respondents were evenly split regarding their school doing a needs

assessment reporting that 38% ($n = 10$) strongly disagreed or disagreed, 15% ($n = 4$) neither agreed nor disagreed and 40% ($n = 12$) agreed or strongly agreed).

The survey further showed that participants agreed that their school provides adequate supervision during recess ($n = 11$; 42%) and lunch ($n = 15$; 58%) (see Table 6). Over half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed ($n = 15$; 58%) that teachers were assigned at their schools to address the environment/climate of the school. Finally, the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that bullying ($n = 20$; 77%), intimidation ($n = 18$, 69%) and harassment ($n = 21$; 81%) had clearly defined rules.

Respondents agreed that their schools did not have anonymous resources for bullying ($n = 9$; 35%), a drop box in a safe area ($n = 11$; 44%) or a phone line available for students to call ($n = 10$; 40%) (see Table 7). The most frequent type of communication between schools and parents were email ($n = 11$; 44%), telephone ($n = 13$; 52%) and newsletters ($n = 9$; 36%).

Table 5

<u>Actions Taken by Schools Prior to Implementing Bullying Prevention Program</u>					
	Very aware	Aware	Neutral/ uncertain	Relatively aware	Completely aware
Held celebration/ ($n = 25$)					
pep fest/ gathering	10 (40%)	5 (20%)	0 (0%)	6 (24%)	4 (16%)
Conducted bullying needs assessment ($n = 26$)	5 (19%)	5 (19%)	4 (15%)	8 (31%)	4 (15%)

Note. This table reflects respondents' answers to the following statements: My school held a celebration/pep fest/ fathering regarding bullying and the schools efforts to reduce it. My school did a needs assessment regarding bullying.

Table 6

Schools and Use of Rules, Environment, and Supervision

	<i>n</i> = 26 (%)				
	Very aware	Aware	Neutral/uncertain	Relatively aware	Completely aware
School supervision of students					
During recess	1 (3%)	3 (12%)	3 (12%)	11 (42%)	8 (31%)
During lunch	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	15 (58%)	10 (39%)
Clearly defined rules					
Bullying	1 (2%)	2 (8%)	3 (12%)	10 (39%)	10 (39%)
Harassment	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	3 (12%)	11 (42%)	10 (39%)
Intimidation	1 (2%)	2 (8%)	5 (19%)	8 (31%)	10 (39%)
Classroom environment					
	2 (8%)	4 (15%)	5 (19%)	9 (35%)	6 (23%)

Note. This table reflects respondents' answers to the following statements: My school provides adequate supervision for students while at school (lunch and recess). There are clearly defined rules for bullying, harassment and intimidation. There are teachers that are assigned to address the environment and climate of the school.

Table 7

Communication Around Bullying with Parents and Students

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
School communicates with parents					
No communication (<i>n</i> = 26)	8 (31%)	9 (35%)	2 (8%)	5 (19%)	2 (7%)
Email (<i>n</i> = 25)	4 (16%)	4 (16%)	5 (20%)	11 (44%)	1 (4%)
Telephone (<i>n</i> = 25)	2 (8%)	2 (8%)	4 (16%)	13 (52%)	4 (16%)
Newsletter (<i>n</i> = 25)	5 (20%)	2 (8%)	8 (32%)	9 (36%)	1 (4%)
Parent-teacher association (<i>n</i> = 25)	7 (28%)	5 (20%)	4 (16%)	7 (28%)	2 (8%)
Students can share issues/concerns					
None (<i>n</i> = 26)	3 (12%)	9 (35%)	4 (15%)	5 (19%)	5 (19%)
Dropbox (<i>n</i> = 25)	7 (28%)	11 (44%)	4 (16%)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)
Phone line (<i>n</i> = 25)	8 (32%)	10 (40%)	4 (16%)	0 (0%)	3 (12%)

Note. This table reflects respondents' answers to the following statements: My school has anonymous ways students can share issues/concerns regarding bullying (no resources, drop box, phone line). My school regularly communicates with students' parents and informs them of issues regarding bullying (no communication, email, telephone, newsletter, parent-teacher association).

Interventions at the classroom level. The survey respondents were then asked questions regarding the interventions that take place in the classroom. The survey findings show that respondents agreed that rules regarding bullying are concrete, clear

and known by the following groups of people: teachers ($n = 13$; 52%), social workers ($n = 11$; 44%), guidance counselors ($n = 7$; 29%), administration ($n = 11$; 44%), parents ($n = 11$; 44%) and students ($n = 12$; 48%) (see Table 8). Respondents strongly agreed ($n = 13$; 52%) that school social workers identify positive behaviors among students and that agreed or strongly agreed ($n = 13$; 55%) that consequences for participating in bullying are consistent.

Most of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed ($n = 10$; 40%) that class meetings discussed bullying and disagreed or strongly disagreed ($n = 14$; 56%) that students are allowed to participate in PTA meetings with concerns regarding bullying (see Table 9).

Table 8

Rules that Address Bullying at School and in Classrooms

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
<i>Rules known by</i>					
Teachers ($n = 25$)	3 (12%)	3 (12%)	3 (12%)	13 (52%)	3 (12%)
Social workers ($n = 25$)	3 (12%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	11 (44%)	9 (36%)
Guidance counselors ($n = 24$)	4 (17%)	1 (4%)	6 (25%)	7 (29%)	6 (25%)
Administration ($n = 25$)	2 (8%)	1 (4%)	3 (12%)	11 (44%)	8 (32%)
Parents ($n = 25$)	2 (8%)	5 (20%)	6 (24%)	11 (44%)	1 (4%)
Students ($n = 25$)	3 (12%)	3 (12%)	3 (12%)	12 (48%)	4 (16%)
<i>Identify positive behavior among students</i>					
Teachers ($n = 25$)	2 (8%)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	12 (48%)	8 (32%)
Social workers ($n = 25$)	2 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (40%)	13 (52%)
Guidance counselors ($n = 23$)	2 (9%)	0 (0%)	5 (21%)	8 (35%)	8 (35%)
Administration ($n = 25$)	2 (8%)	0 (0%)	2 (8%)	13 (52%)	8 (32%)
Parents ($n = 24$)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	10 (42%)	10 (42%)	1 (4%)
<i>Consequences for ($n = 24$)</i>					
bullying are consistent	1 (4%)	5 (21%)	5 (21%)	10 (42%)	3 (13%)

Note. This table reflects respondents' answers to the following statements: Rules regarding bullying are concrete, clear and known by the following groups of people (teachers, social workers, guidance counselors, administration, parents and students). School officials and other influential adults identify positive behavior among students (teachers, social workers, guidance counselors, administration, parents and students). Consequences for participating in bullying are consistent.

Table 9

Meetings that Address Bullying Among School Staff and with Parents

	<i>n</i> = 25 (%)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Class meetings discussing bullying	1 (4%)	4 (16%)	10 (40%)	6 (24%)	4 (16%)
Parent-Teacher meetings	6 (24%)	8 (32%)	8 (32%)	2 (8%)	1 (4%)

Note. This table reflects respondents' answers to the following statements: There are class meetings that discuss bullying, which allows students to express ideas and solutions in their particular classroom. Students are allowed to participate in PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) meetings with issues regarding bullying.

Interventions at the individual level. All of the participants in the survey were asked questions regarding the interventions that take place with students at the individual level. All of the participants agreed or strongly agreed ($n = 25$; 100%) that school officials have one to one talks with students labeled as the “bully” (see Table 10). The findings suggest that the participants agreed or strongly agreed ($n = 14$; 56%) that school officials meet with parents of the bully. Finally, over half of the participants agreed that schools do not provide support groups for parents of bullies ($n = 22$; 88%).

A little over half of the respondent's agreed ($n = 13$; 52%) that school officials have one to one talks with students labeled as the victim (see Table 11). Participants agreed or strongly agreed ($n = 11$; 44%) that school officials meet with parents of the victims and most strongly disagreed or disagreed ($n = 22$; 88%) that schools provide a support group for the parents of victims. Lastly, participants agreed or strongly agreed ($n = 22$; 88%) that schools support victims of bullying and may assist in change of classroom or school changes if necessary.

Table 10

School-Based Interventions on Behalf of the Bully

	<i>n</i> = 25 (%)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
One to one talks with bully	0 (0%)	0 (%)	0 (0%)	12 (48%)	13 (52%)
School officials speak with parents of bully	1 (4%)	3 (12%)	7 (28%)	7 (28%)	7 (28%)
School provides support group for parents of the bully	13 (52%)	9 (36%)	3 (12%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Note. This table reflects respondents' answers to the following statements: School officials have one to one talks with students labeled as the "bully". School officials have discussion with the parents of the bully. My school provides a support group for the parents of the bullies.

Table 11

School-Based Interventions on Behalf of the Victim

	<i>n</i> = 25 (%)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
One to one talks with victim	0 (0%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)	13 (52%)	11 (44%)
School officials speak with parents of victim	1 (4%)	5 (20%)	8 (32%)	7 (28%)	4 (16%)
School provides support group for parents of victim	13 (52%)	9 (36%)	2 (8%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)

Note. This table reflects respondents' answers to the following statements: School officials have one to one talks with students labeled as the "victim". School officials have discussion with the parents of the victim. My school provides a support group for the parents of victims.

Bullying and policies. The final questions the respondents answered were related to bullying and policies. The majority of the respondents for this survey agreed or strongly agreed ($n = 17$; 68%) that their district school policies adequately address bullying (see Table 7). Finally, the participants agreed or strongly agreed ($n = 13$; 52%) that policies support communication between school personnel, students, parents and communities regarding bullying.

Table 12

Presence and Tone of School-Based Bullying Policies

	<i>n</i> = 25 (%)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Policies adequately address bullying	2 (8%)	5 (20%)	1 (4%)	14 (56%)	3 (12%)
Policies support communication	1 (4%)	5 (20%)	6 (24%)	12 (50%)	1 (4%)

Note. This table reflects respondents' answers to the following statements: I feel the policies for my school district adequately address bullying. Policies support communication between school personnel, students, parents and communities regarding bullying

Inferential Statistics

The purpose of the inferential statistic is to determine if there is an association between two variables in the data. The two ordinal variables in this study measures what age best worked with and if bullying as school is a serious concern (see Table 13). The best age worked with independent variable is operationalized with the item, "What best describes the age you work with?" The possible responses to this question are k-5th, 6th-8th and 9th-12th. For the purposes of this statistic grades 6th-8th and 9th-12th were combined to reflect 6th-12th grades (e.g., secondary school grades). The bullying as a serious concern dependent variable is operationalized with the item, "Bullying at my school is a serious concern." The possible responses to this question where strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree. The research question for this study is: Is there an association between age group worked with and bullying as a serious concern. The hypothesis for this study is: There is an association between age group worked with and bullying as a serious concern? The null hypothesis for this study is: There is not an association between age group worked with and bullying as a serious concern.

The p-value for the chi-square of the variables age group worked with and bullying as a serious concern is 0.87 (see Table 14). Since the p-value is greater than .05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Consequently, the data does not support the research hypothesis that there is a significant association between a school social workers age worked with and bullying as a serious concern.

Table 13

Association Between Age Worked with and Bullying

		Strongly disagree and disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly agree and agree
		Bullying is a serious concern		
with	K-5 th <i>n</i> = 15	4 (26%)	2 (13%)	9 (60%)
	Age worked 6 th - 12 th <i>n</i> = 15	5 (33%)	3 (20%)	8 (53%)

Note. This table reflects participants' answers to the following statement/question: What best describes the age you work with? Bullying at my school is a serious concern.

Table 14

P-value of Association

Chi Square	1.24
P-value	0.87

Note. This table reflects chi square and p-value of the association between age level worked with and bullying as a serious concern.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to determine which components of bullying prevention programs are present within Minnesota schools and communities according to Minnesota school social workers. This study also hoped to further expand the knowledge base surrounding the prevalent issue of school bullying. The research findings demonstrate that while most components necessary of a bullying prevention program are present, there are areas that are lacking and could be improved upon. This discussion section will compare the research findings from the current study with the previous research done on bullying.

Bullying in Regards to Participant's School

This study attempted to gain more information about bullying prevention programs and bullying that is present within Minnesota's primary and secondary schools. The results from this study were consistent with the literature in that school social workers around the country are concerned with the issue of bullying and how schools are handling it (e.g., Slovak & Singer, 2009). Findings from Slovak and Singer's (2009) study suggest that while school social workers were unsure of their role when dealing with bullying—specifically cyberbullying—they were clearer that stronger rules and policies need to be in place to deal with bullying and cyberbullying in schools. In the present study, the results were interesting in that there was not a concise answer when asked if the participant's school had a formal bullying prevention program. Interestingly, more participants' agreed or strongly agreed that their bullying prevention was effective. The results also indicated that Minnesota school social workers agree that bullying is a

serious concern at their school and that they wish they could change how their school handles or approaches bullying.

Participants in the current study were asked questions specific to their knowledge of recommendations about bullying prevention that have been implemented by the Governor of Minnesota. The findings were not supported by previous literature, because there have not been any studies conducted regarding that have addressed anti-bullying priorities addressed by the Minnesota Task Force of the Prevention of School Bullying. The current study attempt to determine whether school social work respondents collaborated with the state of Minnesota to help support schools and their anti-bullying efforts, if their school created a school climate center with the Minnesota Department of Educations, and if their school took into consideration the final report recommendations from the Governor. Overall, while some of his recommendations have been implemented, Minnesota schools still have a long ways to go to satisfy the Governor's recommendations.

Awareness and Involvement

The present study sought to understand whether anti-bullying awareness and involvement in respondents' schools included support by parents and other school officials such as teachers, school social workers, and administration. The current study findings were supported by the literature (e.g., Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Whitted and Dupper's (2005) study addressed this question and concluded that school social workers were the most aware of bullying in schools and were also deemed best to handle bullying in schools because they, "...can assume several different roles, including program developer, program promoter and on-site coordinator of bullying prevention programs"

(p. 172). In the current study, findings illustrated that all most groups of adults (e.g., teachers, social workers, guidance counselors, administration, and parents) are aware and involved in the bullying program at their school. However, the most aware and involved group, according to the results from this study, were school social workers.

Interventions at the School Level

Interventions at the school level included introducing students to the bullying prevention program by an assembly or pep fest and also conducting a needs assessment. Although questions addressing the need for assemblies or pep fests were included in the survey based on theoretical literature (cite) and was not supported by previous literature, the importance of conducting community-specific needs assessments was supported by previous research (e.g., Whitted & Dupper, 2005). The completion of a needs assessment “... is essential in preventing bullying in schools” (Whitted & Dupper, 2005, p. 171), because it gives staff and students an opportunity to assess their awareness of bullying and ways to deal with it. Slovak and Singer (2009) conducted a study that focused on cyberbullying. The specific angle of the study was to determine school social workers perceptions regarding cyberbullying. They found that it is important to collect data at each school that determines their unique bullying issues and concern through a needs assessment. In the current study respondents were evenly split whether their school did a needs assessment for bullying in their schools.

Participants in this survey were asked about the supervision and the rules surrounding bullying at their schools. These current findings were supported by previous research studies. Parault, Davis and Pellegrini (2007) conducted a study looking at bullying within different social contexts (e.g., cafeterias, lockers/halls, school dances).

They found that bullying behaviors changed as a result of the venue where there were less structured school settings. Previous research has stressed the importance of clearly defined rules regarding bullying in schools. The inability to arrive at a shared understanding of bullying has led to an, "... underreporting of the phenomenon and an underestimate of the effects of being bullied (Esbensen & Carson, 2009, p. 230). In the current study respondents agreed that there are teachers assigned to address the environment and climate at their schools and agreed that there are clearly defined rules for bullying, harassment and intimidation.

Interventions at the Classroom Level

At the classroom level, interventions include consistency of rules and guidelines inherent to bullying, identifying positive behaviors among students, and assuring that consequences for bullying are consistent. The current findings are supported by previous research. Although there not have been specific studies on the above topics, researchers have concluded that rules surrounding bullying need to be widely known amongst staff and students, which further demonstrates the importance of understanding different types of bullying (Esbensen & Clark, 2009). In the current study school social workers all agreed that rules regarding bullying are concrete, clear and known by teachers, social workers, guidance counselors, administration, students and parents in their schools. Guidance counselors and social workers both strongly agreed that they identify positive behaviors among students, not just negative ones. Furthermore, school social workers agreed that the consequences for engaging in bullying behavior are consistent across school environments.

Interventions at the Individual Level

Interventions at the individual level include having conversations with both the bully and the victim of bullying. The current study was supported by previous research. In a study done by Haesler (2010), they found that, “By incorporating positive classroom conduct rules, rituals, and routines, child behaviors are emulated in the classroom and in the neighborhood” (p. 956). In the current study school social workers strongly agree or agree that their school has serious talks with both the victim of bullying and the students doing the bullying. The findings also showed that schools tend to have more conversations and discussions with the parents of the bullies rather than the victims.

Bullying Policies

In this survey, school social workers were asked questions regarding bullying and policies in their school. The current study was supported by previous research. Although there has not been specific research conducted on policies and bullying, most studies have discussed bullying policies. Li (2010) discussed the importance of having strong policies regarding bullying in schools, specifically cyberbullying. In the current study school social workers agreed or strongly agreed that their school policies adequately address bullying and that the policies also support communication between school personnel, students, parents and communities.

Inferential Statistic

The current study ran an inferential statistics on the variables, “school age worked with” and “bullying as a serious concern”. The p-value of 0.87 was lower than .05, which means that the data was not statistically significant and that there was no relationship between the two variables. The current study was not supported by previous research.

Strengths and Limitations

A major strength of this study was the anonymity of the participants. It gave school social workers that participated in the survey a chance to be completely forthcoming and honest about their school's efforts to reduce bullying and without fear of being identified. Another strength of this study was utilizing a quantitative research design. It allowed the participants to remain anonymous and to draw from a potentially large sample population.

A limitation of the survey was its small sample size and only using the MSSWA to recruit participants. Having a larger sample size from all over Minnesota would have revealed a more accurate picture of how Minnesotan schools are managing bullying issues. Another limitation was only using school social workers. If the research design had surveyed other school employees such as administration and teachers the results could have given multiple perspectives and a larger sample size. Finally, there was a steady dropout rate throughout the survey, which could be attributed to the design of the length of the survey. Having a shorter more and more concise survey could have increased the survey completion rate.

Implications for Future Research

The current study suggests that future research should continue to focus on strategies and programs that address to bullying prevention or bullying as it is occurring in schools. This study showed which components of bullying prevention are present with schools. It would be beneficial to study how to effectively implement more programs and strategies to manage bullying.

Over half of the participants in this survey identified their working environment as being in a rural setting. Future researchers and studies should focus on the differences between urban and rural setting schools and their struggles with bullying. Tailoring and focusing bullying programs to their unique setting and environment is important and necessary. Similarly, it would be beneficial to look at the impact on the different types of bullying, specifically racial bullying and bullying based on sexual preference.

This study focused on school social workers' current perceptions of bullying in the schools where they work. It would be valuable for future research to look at other professionals and their view of bullying within the school environment. Other school officials could include teachers, paraprofessionals, administration and other staff that work closely with students.

Implications for Clinical Social Work Practice and Policy

This study suggests that implications for clinical social work practice in schools should focus on helping all students participating in bullying—the bully, the bullied, and the bully/bullied student. It is important to work with these students to find the root of the problem and to help in the fight against bullying. School social workers and other professionals who work closely with children can learn from this study and how to work with every level of bullying within schools. They can also learn and identify early warning signs of bullying and what to look for within their schools and classrooms.

Policy implications from this study suggest that policies continue to need more emphasis and clarification to help in the fight against bullying. Policies and mandates require strong and ambitious language to prepare schools to better manage bullying.

Along with stronger policies, more funding needs to be generated to support schools in their efforts to prevent and reduce bullying.

Conclusion

Bullying in America's schools is a pervasive and serious concern. Through previous research and the current research, school staff can learn how to more effectively manage bullying. The current research findings showed that bullying components are being demonstrated Minnesota schools, according to school social workers. It is important that more research be done to further evaluate and assess bullying programs in Minnesota and nation-wide.

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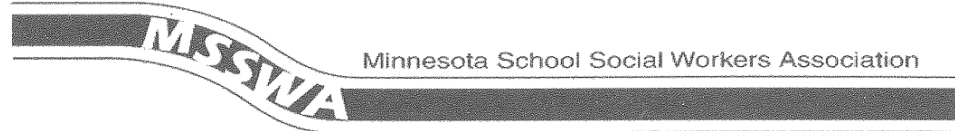
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Appendix A:



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November 13, 2012

Dr. Eleni Roulis, Chair
Institutional Review Board
2115 Summit Avenue
Mail AQU 319
Saint Paul, MN 55105

Dear McKena Martin,

Thank you for contacting me to discuss your proposed research project that you are completing as a graduate student at the University of Saint Thomas and Saint Catherine University. This letter is to confirm that you have the support of the Minnesota School Social Work Association (MSSWA) to survey the members affiliated with MSSWA for your research project: The Effectiveness of Bullying Prevention Programs in Schools.

MSSWA understands that your study is a quantitative research design, which will request MSSWA members to partake in an anonymous survey online. MSSWA members can choose to decline or participate in the survey, and their decision whether or not to participate will not harm their relationship with St. Catherine University or The University of St. Thomas in any way. MSSWA also appreciates your effort to protect the confidentiality of its members.

MSSWA understands surveys will not be distributed until your project has been reviewed and accepted by your committee members, research chair, and the Institutional Review Board at the University of Saint Thomas. MSSWA also understands that information collected will be shared in a public forum for your research project.

MSSWA does not predict any risk or direct benefit to our organization.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Minnesota School Social Workers Association's involvement in this research study, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Julie Ann Porath, MSW LICSW
MSSWA Membership Co-Chair &
Graduate Research Contact
Julie.porath@spps.org
651-744-3531

Celebrating Over 40 Years of MSSWA: Serving Children Through Their School, Home & Community

Appendix B:

Which Bullying Components are Present Within Minnesota Schools and Communities?

RESEARCH INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Introduction:

You are invited to participate in a research study that aims to assess the effectiveness of school-based bullying prevention programs. The researcher of this project is McKena Martin, a Master's of Social Work Student in the School of Social Work, at Saint Catherine University and University of Saint Thomas. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a member of the Minnesota School Social Worker Association.

Background Information:

The purpose of this research project is to determine the effectiveness of school-based bullying prevention programs.

Procedures:

If you decide to take part in this research study you will answer 23 questions regarding some demographic information and information about your schools bullying prevention program. The survey may take anywhere from 15-20 minutes to complete. You may quit the survey at any point if you wish.

Risks and Benefits to Participation:

There are no risks involved in completing this survey. Due to the confidentiality and anonymity of participants, there are no foreseen risks due to taking part in this project. There are no direct benefits of participating.

Compensation:

There is no compensation for this study.

Confidentiality:

Protecting confidentiality and anonymity of this projects participants is of utmost importance. There are no questions regarding personal questions that would lead to identification of participants. The researcher will keep results of the survey on a locked computer in her home. Participants may choose to skip questions that they feel uncomfortable asking, or quit the survey at any time they like.

Voluntary Nature of Study:

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your decision to participate in this study or not will not affect future relations with the University of St. Thomas, St. Catherine University, or this researcher. Termination of participation in this study will have no effect upon these relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have any questions about this study or consent form please feel free to contact me at XXXX@stthomas.edu. You may also contact the Chair of my research committee, Kari Fletcher at flet1660@stthomas.edu or 651-962-5807. The chair of the University of Saint Thomas Institutional Review Board is Eleni Roulis. She may be contacted at (651) 962-5341.

Statement of Consent:

By signing below you are giving your consent and making a decision to participate in this study. Your signature confirms that you have read the information in this form and all of your questions have been answered. Even after signing this form, you may terminate your participation in this study up to one week following the scheduled interview.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

Appendix C:

November 29, 2012

School Social Worker

Dear School Social Worker,

My name is McKena Martin. I am currently a graduate student at the University of Saint Thomas and Saint Catherine University in the Masters of Social Work program. You have been contacted to participate in my exploratory research study on which bullying components are present within Minnesota schools and communities. You have been chosen to participate in this study because of your profession as a school social worker.

I would appreciate your participation by completing an anonymous survey for my study to help understand which bullying components are present within Minnesota schools and communities. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you chose to participate in the survey you may skip questions that you don't feel comfortable answering, and can chose to leave the survey at any time. Your confidentiality and privacy is of utmost importance to the researcher, therefore no identifying factors will be asked of you.

I hope that you chose to participate in this study and use your expertise as a school social work to help fight bullying. Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have further questions or inquiries please contact me at XXXX@stthomas.edu or at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Thank you,

McKena Martin, B.S.W, LSW
School of Social Work
University of Saint Thomas/ Saint Catherine University

Appendix D:
What Bullying Components are Present Within Minnesota Schools and
Communities?
Survey

Participants, please answer the following questions. If there is any that you don't wish to answer, please skip them. All information will be kept confidential and anonymous.

If you work at more than one school, please pick ONE to answer the survey questions about.

Demographics:

(D1) How many years have you been a school social worker?

- A. 0-5
- B. 6-10
- C. 11-15
- D. 16+

(D2) What is your current level of licensure?

- A. Licensed Social Worker (LSW)
- B. Licensed Graduate Social Worker (LGSW)
- C. Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW)
- D. Licensed Independent Social Worker (LISW)
- E. Other (Please specify)

(D3) What best describes the age group you work with?

- A. K-5th
- B. 6th -8th
- C. 9th -12th
- D. Other (Please specify)

(D4) What best describes where your school is located?

- A. Urban
- B. Rural
- C. Metro

(D5) How many students does your school serve?

- A. 0-200
- B. 300-500
- C. 600-800
- D. 800+

(D6) What best describes the region where you work?

- A. Northeast
- B. Northwest
- C. West Central
- D. East Central
- E. Southwest
- F. Southeast
- G. Twin Cities Metro

Bullying in regards to your school:

(B1) My school has a formal bullying prevention program:

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(B2) I feel the bullying prevention program at my school is effective and worth implementing.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(B3) Bullying at my school is a serious concern.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(B4) I wish I could change an aspect of how my school deals with bullying problems.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(B5) My school collects information/data regarding bullying.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(B6) My school collaborates with the state of Minnesota to help support other schools and their anti-bullying efforts.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(B7) My school has created a school climate center with the Minnesota Department of Education.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(B8) My school took into consideration the final report recommendations from the Governor's task force on bullying.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

Components of Bullying Prevention Program:

Awareness/Involvement:

(A1) The following groups of adults are aware of the bullying problem at their school:

Teachers:	Very Aware	Aware	Neutral/ Uncertain	Relatively unaware	Completely unaware
Social Workers:	Very Aware	Aware	Neutral/ Uncertain	Relatively unaware	Completely unaware
Guidance Counselors:	Very Aware	Aware	Neutral/ Uncertain	Relatively unaware	Completely unaware
Administration:	Very Aware	Aware	Neutral/ Uncertain	Relatively unaware	Completely unaware
Parents:	Very Aware	Aware	Neutral/ Uncertain	Relatively unaware	Completely unaware

(A2) Members involved in the bully prevention program are serious about their role:

Teachers:	Very involved	Involved	Neutral/ Uncertain	Relatively uninvolved	Completely uninvolved
Social Workers:	Very involved	Involved	Neutral/ Uncertain	Relatively uninvolved	Completely uninvolved
Guidance Counselors:	Very involved	Involved	Neutral/ Uncertain	Relatively uninvolved	Completely uninvolved
Administration:	Very involved	Involved	Neutral/ Uncertain	Relatively uninvolved	Completely uninvolved
Parents:	Very involved	Involved	Neutral/ Uncertain	Relatively uninvolved	Completely uninvolved

Interventions at the school level:

Please use the following scale for the statements below.

(S1) My school held a celebration/ pep fest/ gathering regarding bullying and the schools efforts to reduce it.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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(S2) My school did a needs assessment regarding bullying.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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(S3) My school provides adequate supervision for students while at school.

My school provides supervision during recess:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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My school provides supervision during lunch times:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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(S4) My school has an anonymous way students can share issues/concerns regarding bullying.

My school does not have any anonymous resources:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Dropbox in a safe area:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Phone line students may call:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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(S5) My school regularly communicates with student's parents and informs them of issues regarding bullying.

My school does not communicate with parents:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Email:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Telephone:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Newsletter:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Parent-teacher association:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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(S6) There are teachers that are assigned to address the environment and climate of the school.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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(S7) There are clearly defined rules for bullying, harassment, and intimidation.

Bullying:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Harassment:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Intimidation:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Interventions at the classroom level:

(C1) Rules regarding bullying are concrete, clear and known by the following groups of people:

Teachers:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Social Workers:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Guidance Counselors:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
-------------------	----------	----------------------------	-------	----------------

Administration:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Parents:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Students:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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(C2) School officials and other influential adults identify positive behavior among students.

Teachers:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Social Workers:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
-------------------	----------	----------------------------	-------	----------------

Guidance Counselors:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
-------------------	----------	----------------------------	-------	----------------

Administration:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Parents:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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(C3) Consequences for participating in bullying are consistent.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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(C4) There are class meetings that discuss bullying, which allow students to express ideas and solutions in their particular classroom

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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(C5) Students are allowed to participate in PTA meetings with issues regarding bullying.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

Interventions at the individual level:

(I1) School officials have one to one talks with students labeled as the “bully”.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(I2) School officials have one to one talks with students labeled as the “victim”.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(I3) School officials have discussion with the parents of either the bully or the victim.

Parents of the bully:

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

Parents of the bullied:

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(I4) My school provides a support group for parents of bullies and parents of victims.

Parents of the bully:

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

Parents of the bullied:

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(I5) My school supports the victim of bullying and can help them change their classroom or assist in finding a different school in extreme cases.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(I2) School officials have one to one talks with students labeled as the “victim”.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

Bullying and policies:

(P1) I feel the policies for my school district adequately address bullying.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

(P2) Policies support communication between school personnel, students, parents, and communities regarding bullying.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Agree

Strongly agree

Appendix E:

Mental Health and Bullying Resources

Counseling/Mental Health Resources

Interprofessional Center

Open through the University of Saint Thomas, the Interprofessional Center (IPC) offers counseling and legal services. Their counseling services consist of psychological assessments and therapeutic treatment planning. Further information can be found at the following website: <http://www.stthomas.edu/ipc/about/>

Phone number: 651.962.4820

Address: 30 South 10th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Bullying Resources for Social Workers/Education Professionals

StopBullying.gov

This is an interactive website that shows schools, teachers, parents, and children what to do about bullying. It provides definitions of bullying, cyberbullying, who is at risk or being bullied, how to prevent bullying, how to respond to bullying, and other resources. More information can be found at the following website: www.stopbullying.gov

Hazelden-Bullying Prevention

Hazelden is located throughout the country, and has multiple locations in Minnesota. They focus on alcohol and drug abuse treatment, but also do bullying prevention work. Dan Olweus, founder of The Olweus Bullying Prevention program, has done work with this organization. They offer information for schools, teachers, and parents and a 24-hour hotline (800.257.7810).

Phone number: 651.213.4200

Address: P.O. Box 11
15251 Pleasant Valley Rd.
Center City, MN 55012-0011

Bullying Resources for Families and Students

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available for anyone who is feeling depressed and is considering suicide as an option. A trained counselor is available 24/7 to

talk to. Anyone, regardless of their unique burden they are experiencing, is encouraged to call.

Phone number: 1.800.273.TALK or 1.800.273.8255

StopBullying.gov

As listed above, this also an excellent resource for students who may be being bullied or engaging in bullying others. This is an interactive website that shows schools, teachers, parents, and children what to do about bullying. It provides definitions of bullying, cyberbullying, who is at risk or being bullied, how to prevent bullying, how to respond to bullying, and other resources. More information can be found at the following website: www.stopbullying.gov

National Crime Prevention Council

National Crime Prevention Council offers parents specific advice about how to talk to their children about bullying, and what to do if they suspect their child is being bullied or if they are child is bullying others. It also offers other resources for training, programs and events regarding bullying. Further information can be found at the following website: <http://www.ncpc.org/topics/bullying/what-parents-can-do>

Bullying Resources for Communities

Not In Our Town

Not In Our Town is a non-profit organization that focuses on communities to create an inclusive environment for all citizens that live there. Not in Our Town believes that change starts within communities. They offer resources, blogs, and groups around bullying in communities and schools. Further information can be found at the following website: <http://www.niot.org/node/17>